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ABSTRACT

This report describes sports in Germany, explaining that sport is part of Germany's culture. Popular sports are enjoyed by both the public and private sector. Germany has a well-developed club and association sector. One in three Germans belongs to a sports organization. A major feature of sport in Germany is its autonomy. Popular sports begin in school and promote health and wellbeing. The German Handicapped Sports Association promotes sports for people with disabilities. Top athletes are role models for young people in general and young athletes in particular. There is government support for top athletes. The sporting world has to work with the problem of drugs in athletics (doping to boost performance). Sponsorship is becoming increasingly important as a new form of cooperation between the sport and business sectors. The mass media has a tremendous influence on German athletics, both positive and negative. About one-third of European Union citizens are members of sports associations. The European Sports Forum was established in 1991 to create a forum for discussion and information exchange. Germany's involvement in the Olympics has been very politicized over the years for many reasons, and competitive sport has rarely been free from political pressure. (SM)

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Sport in Germany

by

Steffen Beitz

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"You can bring in a lot of people if you tell them sport is healthy. But should they be told this? If they engage in sport to the limits of its healthiness, is it still sport in which they are engaging?"

Bertold Brecht (1898-1956), writer and theatre director

The social function of sport

There are many aspects to sport. It can be recreation and entertainment, international understanding and politics, an economic factor and a business. But it can also be chauvinism, brutality and even death.

Sport is part of a society's culture. Ideally, it teaches attitudes and skills that cannot completely be imparted in an abstract way. **Fair play** and respect for one's opponent as the ethical foundation of sporting activities are transferable to everyday life outside the sporting sphere. The social inclusion of various strata and groups of society is one of sport's foremost social achievements, particularly at club level.

In team sport, the one player complements the other. Togetherness makes a team strong. Sport can strengthen social awareness and sensibility and, above all, willingness to integrate. Particularly for children and adolescents, it offers alternatives to some of the more dubious temptations of the entertainment industry.

Popular sport

Popular sport enjoys strong sponsorship from both public and private sectors in Germany. As in the case of competitive sport, this, too, is aimed at encouraging best efforts, but not at maximum performance. Popular sport focuses on **exercise**, **playful self-development** through enjoyment and taking part in community life.

Generally, Germany has a well-developed **club and association sector** and relatively high level of organisation among the population. There is probably no sphere in German society without an organisational structure. Almost 60 per cent of all Germans are members of one organisation or another.

In the whole spectrum of different fields of activity, sport is the most popular. Almost every third German is a member of a sports organisation. Besides the 26 million members of the **German Sports Federation** (Deutsche Sportbund – **DSB**), and estimated 15 million others engage in sport without belonging to an organisation. In the new eastern German federal states (Länder), some 10 per cent of the people are members of sports organisations, compared to an average of 30 per cent in the original western German states. It is said that every second German is active in some kind of sport.

The DSB, founded in 1950, is the umbrella for the 16 state sports federations and numerous other specialised sports associations. In terms of numbers, it is the largest organisation in Germany. A total of 2.6 million people carry out honorary functions in their associations. Working as trainers, coaches or committee members, they are the ones who make popular sport possible and ensure the promotion of talented children and adolescents.

With more than 6.3 million members, the **German Football Federation** (Deutsche Fussball-Bund - **DFB**) has the largest membership of any sports organisation. There are thousands of active football clubs and associations. The game draw hundreds of thousands into the stadiums to watch weekly professional fixtures, and many more watch televised matches. The Football World Championship in Italy in 1990, which brought German team its third world title, made the game even more popular. Other DSB associations with large memberships are the **German Gymnastics Federation** (Deutsche Turner-Bund), with more than 4.7 million members, and the **German Tennis Federation** (Deutsche Tennis Bund) with more than 2.1 million.

Sports enthusiasts in the 'old' German states have at their disposal some 55,000 sports and school sports grounds, almost 35,000 sports and gymnastics halls and 7,300 indoor and open-air swimming pools. The new eastern states, however, still need to catch up in popular sports facilities. Most of their existing amenities need modernising. The Federal government has provided extra funds for this purpose in recent years.

A major feature of sport in Germany is its autonomy. It is free of government intervention and regulation. Its sponsors are sports organisations acting on their own responsibility. The government steps in and provides funds only when sports organisations lack the money to finance their activities. Constitutional law requires Federal funds to be confined to top-level sporting performance, while popular sport is the domain of the Länder (states) and the

regional and local authorities, meaning that they focus on building sports grounds and facilities, and school, university, club and association sport. Sport sponsorship at this level is coordinated by the **Permanent Conference of Sports Ministers of the Länder** (Ständige Konferenz der Sportminister der Länder – **SMK**).

As sponsors of organised sport, the more than 86,000 DSB sports associations are registered not-for-profit organisations. In general – so long as they do not engage in commercial activities – they are not liable to tax and thus are promoted indirectly by the state.

The proliferation of organisations and memberships has developed parallel to the widening of the spectrum of types of sport. More new sport disciplines have been invented since the 1970s than in any one century before. Mountain biking, surfing, rafting (shooting the rapids by rubber boat), para-gliding, climbing, snowboarding and fitness training now compete with traditional sports such as football or tennis, which began in the 14th and 19th centuries respectively.

But 'older' disciplines such as swimming, gymnastics or cycle racing are still among the **most popular sports**. Almost two-thirds of the German people see themselves as active sports participants. Tens of thousands regularly take part in city marathons or mass road races and hikes or use indoor and outdoor swimming pools. Obviously, a 'Keep Trim' campaign organised by the DSB has had widespread impacts. It became extremely popular in the 1970s, and also influenced lifestyle in the 1980s and 1990s.

The most popular sports

Germans from the age of 14 are regularly or occasionally active in (%):

Swimming	73
Walking/rambling	52
Gymnastics	29
Mini-golf	24
Jogging	21
Table tennis	21
Cycle racing	20
Mountain biking	15
Fitness training	15
Volleyball	13
Downhill skiing	12
Cross-country skiing	12
Football	11
Mountain climbing	11
Tennis	11
Athletics	10

As at 1998
Source: Allensbach Institute for Public Opinion Research

Popular sport begins at school, where it performs the important task of promoting not only the health of children and adolescents, but also their social development. In school sports, mainly athletics, gymnastics, dance, swimming and – most important – team games are taught. Sport is a compulsory subject from the first to the final class.

The **Federal Youth Games Festival** (Bundesjugendspiele) has been held annually since 1951. About four million children and adolescents take part in this major sports event, which is designed to encourage young people to test their abilities in competition. It also aims to stimulate the ambition to engage in more competitive sport as well as simply to develop young people's interest in sport. Participation is mandatory up to the tenth class. The festival consists of competition in apparatus gymnastics, track-and-field events and swimming. It is in three parts, requiring the performance of three exercises from four sports disciplines, which the participants are free to choose.

The Federal competition **Youth Trains for Olympia** (Jugend trainiert für Olympia) is a school team event launched to promote cooperation between schools and sports clubs. It is an important means of discovering talent, with up to 800,000 school students taking part every year.

Commercial sports offers organised entirely on service lines have in many places challenged popular club sport for some years now. The estimated 9,000 operators of commercial sports facilities (including squash and tennis centres, fitness and gymnastics studios) reflect growing individualism in western society and the specific structure of urban life. 'Modern' German men and women are becoming less routine and more spontaneous in organising their leisure time. They pop along the fitness studio on the corner whenever and with whom they are inclined, working through a self-designed programme instead of taking part in communal exercises with a particular team to a fixed timetable.

The trend-setters of this fitness fad are mainly higher income earners. Physical attractiveness and perfect body proportions are viewed increasingly both in private life and at work as the prerequisite for social recognition. Also, the decline in physically demanding work has created a demand for it to be compensated by leisure activities. The result since the 1980s has been a boom in leisure sports. The most recent sport to be spawned by this movement, although far behind aerobics and jogging, is inline skating.

The **German Gymnastics Federation** (Deutsche Turner-Bund) and its affiliated organisations, as well as the manufacturers of sportswear and equipment and many other commercial sponsors, particularly hotels, have discovered a market niche. They offer health sports schemes, often with programmes lasting one week. On the whole, health sports enthusiasts are people with no interest in popular sport and no wish to get involved in club

life. Prophylactic health sport – which is sponsored by various health insurance companies – focuses on functional gymnastics, posture and cardiovascular training and relaxation exercises. Increasingly, sports clubs and associations, particularly those with declining memberships and difficulty in attracting young people, see this as an opportunity to appeal to new groups. These are 'first-timers' and people returning to sporting activities after having been forced to abandon them for extended periods due to family or job commitments.

In the **health sector**, sport is an important cost-cutting factor. About 30 per cent of medical costs incurred in Germany result from heart, circulatory or metabolic disorders. Medical research has shown lack of exercise and physical work to be one of the reasons for the increase in cardiovascular diseases. Physical inactivity forced on people through having to remain seated at work often poses a threat to their health. It is obvious that popular sports are the best answer because they require the right measure of physical exercise. They also act to prevent posture damage and weaknesses. Furthermore, over-eating or poor diets cause ailments that can be cured by sports activities, which also play a key role in the rehabilitation of patients with cardiovascular illnesses.

One in every four Germans is now more than 60 years-old. This faces popular sport with new challenges. Already, the 20,000 clubs in the Germ Gymnastics Federation have created a range of sports programmes tailored to meet the needs of various age groups. Others still have to adapt to the requirements of senior citizens.

Sport for the handicapped

Sport plays a major role in the leisure activities of the handicapped, giving pleasure, stimulating self-awareness and self-confidence, offering motivation and helping the process of social integration. There are more than five million handicapped people in Germany. The **German Handicapped Sports Association** (Deutsche Behinderten-Sportverband – **DBS**) – incorporating the German Wheelchair Sports Association, the German Deaf Sports Association and the German Blind Chess Association – has a total membership of about 300,000. The DBS offers its members more than 40 types of sport, catering for the physically disabled, including the wheelchair-bound, the totally and partially blind and the mentally handicapped. The German Deaf Association provides 21 sports disciplines. Additional sports programmes for the handicapped are run by special homes, day and youth centres, and church institutions.

Responsibility for promoting sport for the handicapped is the same as for sport in general. The Federal government allocates substantial funds for sport for the handicapped, which is organised in the form of both rehabilitation sport and general activities in popular and high-performance sport. The Federal Interior Ministry allocates special funds to enable German sportsmen and sportswomen to compete in international events. But no-one sponsors handicapped sports competitors, due either to a lack of interest in their sports events or insufficient PR work in this sector. Yet when it comes to top-level sport for the handicapped, Germany is a world leader. At the Paralympics in Albertville and Barcelona, the DBS team came second after the USA. At Lillehammer in 1994, Germany came second after host nation Norway. In Atlanta in 1996, Germany came third, but regained second place in 1998 in Nagano.

"I no longer live under a magnifying glass, but under a microscope."

Michael Schumacher, twice Formula One motor racing world champion

Top performers in sport

Top sportsmen and sportswomen are role models for young people in general and in popular sport in particular. Stars such as swimmer Franziska von Almsick, footballer Lothar Matthäus and racing cyclist Jan Ullrich are ikons who, for many fans, must live up to much higher ethical standards than most other people. If, for example, Michael Schumacher announces that he plans to move to Switzerland for tax reasons, or athlete Kathrin Krabbe is penalised for taking performance-boosting drugs, it's not only the prestige of sport but the self-image of society as a whole that suffers. Top sporting celebrities today must conform to high public expectations in the way they live. Tennis ace Michel Stich established a foundation, which bears his name, to help HIV-positive and Aids-infected children. Michael Schumacher sells toy cars, baseball caps and T-shirts and donates part of the proceeds to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). As envoy of the International Football Federation (FIFA), national football star Jürgen Klinsmann works for cooperation between FIFA and the SOS Children's Villages. Money is playing an increasing role in the organisation and marketing of sport as well as in the careers of sportsmen and sportswomen.

The infrastructure of top-performance sport includes 20 Olympic bases, 16 **Federal Performance Centres** providing mainly centralised advanced training run by Federal organisations for top achievers and trainers, and 195 Federal bases. About 700 top athletes do

their compulsory military service in a total of 28 sports promotion groups of the Bundeswehr (armed services). Budding sports stars do their training at residential sports colleges funded by state and local authorities. The main implementing organisations of top-performance sport are the **Bundesfachverbände**, which specialise in individual sports sectors. Their job is to put together national teams and train and prepare them for international events as well as making sure they get there.

The Federal government sponsors only top-performance sport. For 2000, it has allocated DM 222 million for training and competition programmes, sports medical care, the training and payment of fulltime Federal trainers, the building of sports facilities and scientific research in the sports sector. Within the Federal government, in which nine ministries are concerned with sport, the **Federal Interior Ministry** coordinates all matters pertaining to sport and cooperates with the Sports Committee of the German Bundestag (Federal Parliament).

In Germany, the **main centres of sports science** are the Federal Sports Science Institute (BISp) in Cologne, the Institute for Applied Training Studies (IAT) in Leipzig and the Institute for Research and Development of Sports Apparatus (FES) in Berlin. Other leading sports institutions are the Management and Administration Academy (FVA) in Berlin, the Trainers Academy and the German Sports College, both in Cologne.

From an athlete's point of view, modern high-performance sport requires not only intensive training and comprehensive backup in terms of health and social matters, but also a certain financial security. Mainly responsible for this is the **German Sports Aid Foundation** (Stiftung Deutsche Sporthilfe – DSH), a social welfare facility set to give the financial support needed for independent training of men and women devoting many years to their sport. It also aims to help athletes gain vocational qualifications for later.

The foundation has no state connections. Its funds accrue from private donations, the sale of special-issue postage stamps and revenue from a television lottery. Since 1967, the DSH has raised a total of DM 500 million for the sponsorship of top sports performers, many of whom have been completely dependent on this support. Today, DM 30 million is dedicated annually to 3,759 leading and emerging top sportsmen and sportswomen and 800 students at residential sports colleges.

The DSH was able to carry out its work without government aid until 1990 when, practically overnight, the foundation had to take on responsibility for an additional 2,000 athletes from the new eastern federal states after German reunification. For more than two years this was not possible without Federal government assistance.

Because the DSH itself cannot engage in commercial activities it founded the German Sport Marketing Co. Ltd. The company, for example, marketed the German rights to the logo for the Olympic Games in Sydney and sold them to firms for a licence fee. This income also benefits German top sports performers. In addition, the DSH launched an initiative in 2000 to tie formerly promoted athletes to it and win them over to form a 'Veteran's Club' as donors and supporters.

> *"We stand up for fair play, we fight against drugs in sport and take a clear position against misplaced ambition and manipulation of performance. We aim to give our all in sporting competition, but not at the cost of our self-respect and giving up human values."*
>
> Birgit Fischer, German Olympic canoe champion

Drugs and sport

After German reunification the public became aware of the great extent to which drugs had been used systematically and widely in high-performance sport in the former German Democratic Republic. It also became known that 'doping' had been practised as well in the original Federal Republic prior to unity. The use of performance-boosting drugs not only damages the image of sport, but also destroys the role-model function of top athletes. The pursuit of achievement and success and the expectations of the business world, the media and the general public have driven many a sports idol to use anabolic steroids and growth-stimulating hormones.

In Germany, it is left to the sporting world to deal with the drugs problem in accordance with its basic principle of autonomy and self-sufficiency. As early as 1974, a **Doping Analysis Commissioner** attached to the Federal Sports Science Institute began taking regular doping test samples at national and international sports events. Financial sponsorship enables the commissioner to develop scientifically reliable means of proving the use of banned substances recurrently used in sport. With **doping control laboratories** in Cologne and Kreischa

accredited by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), Germany provides a highly efficient analysis service which is also available to foreign users.

In their 1977 'Basic Declaration on Top-performance Sport', German competitive sports officials categorically rejected all forms of medico-pharmacological manipulation of athletes. In 1991, at the suggestion of and funded by the Federal Interior Minister, the National Olympic Committee (NOK) and the DSB set up an independent Anti-doping Commission headed by Dr Hans Evers. Drawing on experience, the commission drew up a concept on how to combat the doping phenomenon and unveiled it in June of the same year. Its suggestions laid the foundation for dealing with drug abuse in the German sports world.

A general ban on drugs use applies to sportsmen and sportswomen in all member organisations of the DSB and its officials and helpers. Federal government sponsorship of leading athletes is conditional on the recipients' compliance with the DSB's **Doping Control System (DKS).** With three exceptions, all specialised Olympic organisations have joined it. Drug tests, which are continually reviewed and improved, are carried out in all Olympic organisations both during competitions and in training.

Sports organisations spend some DM 1.2 million a year on a total of about 4,000 drug tests during training. About the same amount is spent on tests during competitions. So German competitors are checked more stringently and more frequently than are the athletes of other countries. Checks during training are the responsibility of the joint Anti-doping Commission. The setting up of a national Anti-doping Agency is planned. Doping violations are dealt with effectively within the jurisdiction of the disciplinary bodies of the respective sports organisations. In general, a positive test result spells the end of the offender's sporting career, mostly resulting in uncertain job prospects. Prohibition norms and sanctions in the field of sport complement general state legal norms (pharmaceuticals and narcotics legislation).

At international level, the sports sector in Germany has often taken the lead in the fight against doping. The Federal Republic is signatory to the Convention Against Doping in Sport concluded in 1988 between the NOCs of the USA and the former USSR and the Council of Europe's Anti-Doping Agreement of 1989.

Fans and officials alike were shocked when in November 1999 two tests of German 5,000-metre Olympic track-and-field gold medallist Dieter Baumann found excessive traces of the

banned anabolic Nandrolon in his urine. Baumann, 35, had for years engaged in the campaign against doping and called for tough action against offenders. The German Light Athletics Association suspended Baumann and then called on the association's independent Legal Committee to bar him from competitive sport for two years. Baumann consistently denied having knowingly taken the substance, claiming that an unknown person must have injected it into his toothpaste tube. He fought the suspension order in court, but lost. In June 2000, however, the LAA's Legal Committee lifted it, saying there was no conclusive evidence against Baumann.

> *"I am pleased that industry and commerce and sport are seeking to cooperate. I will support every meaningful step in this direction."*
>
> Former Chancellor Helmut Kohl

Commercial sponsorship

The huge growth in the commercial significance of sport has strengthened the sports movement and made it financially more independent. **Sponsorship** is becoming increasingly important as a new form of cooperation between the sport and business sectors. In view of ever tighter public budgets, it would also appear to be necessary.

Patronage was long the main channel for the business world's backing of sport. In the meantime, sponsorship has become the dominant factor, whereby contractual agreements have taken the place of random generosity. The 'marketing' of sport has spawned the emergence of agencies acting as intermediaries between the sponsors and those sponsored.

Sponsors of sports events and individual sportsmen and sportswomen are out to give their products a special sporting image. Without the commercial sector's willingness to invest large sums of money, sport would not exist in its present form. Appearance and prize money for athletes alone swallows up almost one-third of the revenue from sports events.

But at the same time, the great majority of sports organisations are dependent on members' subscriptions. Commercial companies spend 'only' about DM 2.3 billion a year (1997) on sponsorship (compared with only DM 500 million on cultural activities). The state (the Federal, Länder and municipal budgets) spends some DM 5.5 billion a year on sports sponsorship, with by far the lion's share being contributed by municipal authorities.

In February 1996, 37 representatives of sport, industry and politics met at a Round Table conference chaired by Chancellor Helmut Kohl and launched the **Industry and Sport Initiative Group** (Initiativkreis Wirtschaft und Sport), headed by former Daimler-Benz chief Edzard Reuter. The joint ventures it initiated were to be directed mainly at adolescents. Sport is no small economic factor. Every year, private households in Germany spend some DM 43 billion on sports-related goods and services. Two percent of all wage and salary earners work in or for the sports sector - the same proportion as in the chemicals industry.

The dependency on and involvement of sport in industry have grown at the same pace as high-achievement sport - and to a greater extent the overall leisure movement - and developed into key commercial markets. This has not only created the need for a major sports industry. By 'privatising' sport, big-name manufacturers have also gained increasing direct influence on sportsmen and sportswomen, types of sport and sports events.

However, German manufacturers of sports articles are suffering from an ongoing slump. From the beginning to the end of the 1990s total production and both imports and exports declined. The production of sports equipment, clothing, shoes and leisure articles hovered around DM 4 billion. According to the **Federation of German Sports Goods Manufacturers** (Bundesverband der Deutschen Sportartikelindustrie - BSI), the production value in 1999 totalled DM 4.1 billion. Exports also declined, totalling DM 1.15 billion in 1999, while imports totalled DM 3.4 billion.

Basically, there is a simple explanation for what motivates companies to get active in popular sports. Their involvement in sport can exert a positive influence on achievement and endurance levels in working life and even improve the work climate. Sport represents attitudes such as self-confidence, team spirit, and the overcoming of anxiety and hesitancy - all attributes sought by employers. This is why innumerable companies with large work forces cooperate with employees' representatives in organising sports programmes and events. They set up **company sports clubs**, rent neighbourhood gym halls, build their own sports centres or even pay employees' membership dues to local sports clubs.

The Hoechst AG chemical concern gives financial backing to 200 sports associations in the vicinity of its main factory at Frankfurt-on-Main alone by subsidising their festivals and clubhouses or the purchase of sports equipment. The Hamburg-Mannheimer-Versicherungs AG insurance company employs a fulltime sports steward in its own multi-purpose hall. Some

1,850 of the 2,500 employees at its Hamburg headquarters are members of the company sports association. The oldest German company sports organisation was founded on July 1, 1904 in Leverkusen by employees of the Bayer chemicals company. Today, there are 12 company-sponsored sports associations in Leverkusen. The Bayer Leverkusen football club is a member of the Federal Football League (Bundesliga), and in May 2000 was runner-up in the 1999/2000 season League Championship.

> *"The freedom of sport must not be sacrificed to the diktat of commerce. It all begins with the setting of starting times to coincide with peak TV viewing times used by advertisers - and ends where purely telegenic sports or those useful to the sports goods manufacturers are sponsored, neglecting disciplines to which sport owes its very variety and attraction."*
>
> Former German President Roman Herzog

Sport and the media

Sport keeps pace with the times. It also suffers the dark side of commercialisation and professionalization. It has been caught in the grip of television, now increasingly dominating the public image of sport, and is thus prey to the exigencies of advertising and mass consumer demand. But the television invasion of the sporting world affects only the few disciplines that can count on a reliable following - football, Formula One motor racing, tennis, boxing and perhaps track and field events too. But handball, swimming, fencing or horse-riding all suffer as a result of the monopoly of television.

World sports stars are modern-day entertainers. The media turn them into short-lived idols, opening up the way for the cult of victory, record-breaking and triumph. Through the medium of TV, millions of highly-paid protagonists can tune in to a world theatre. More than 18 million television viewers in Germany alone saw the world heavyweight championship boxing duel between German Axel Schulz and South Africa's Francois Botha. The 1998 European Football Championship quarter-final match between Germany and Croatia was watched by more than 23 million TV viewers. Records like this are only possible when top-line sports events are stage-managed. It's a trend almost impossible to halt. Two Bundesliga football clubs have already gone public on the stock market. And the German Football Federation has sold the television transmission rights to its matches to 2004 to a pay-TV station for DM 3 billion, a sum that surprised even insiders.

Steffen Haffner, sports editor of the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ), comments: "Today's successful athletes don't come from nothing. They need years of support as juniors in clubs and associations, and above all from (public funds,). Without sponsorship of young talent, television would one day find itself without sporting heroes."

However, television is also an important sports intermediary and propagandist. And the dominant position of TV has another good point - it makes sport more transparent. With TV cameras all around the arena, no foul goes undetected,

A wealth of media is available to satisfy German sports fans' needs for information and entertainment. More than 75 German-language publications focus purely on sport. Compared to television, however, the influence of the print media on sport is in steady decline. Often, all that remains for the Press is to react to television. Nevertheless, almost 10 per cent of the turnover of newspapers and magazines is attributable to sport. Some DM 700 million is poured into a form of advertising that turns athletes and stadiums into publicity backdrops – DM 200 million is spent on the print media and DM 500 million on radio and television. No daily newspaper, no radio station, and certainly no TV channel could afford not to report on international, national or at least local sports events. Anyone with no other interests can stay tuned virtually round-the-clock to the commercial sports channel DSF, or subscribe to a sports channel of the pay-TV station Premiere World.

Sport and Europe

About one-third of European Union (EU) citizens are members of sports associations. The European club landscape takes many forms, both legally (association, cooperative, company) and with regard to affiliation with umbrella structures (organisations, ministries). The **European Commission** says the wide variety of entities responsible for sport and the complicated distribution of competence in the individual member countries create an urgent need for cooperation. For this reason, the **European Sports Forum** was set up in December 1991 to create a consultative organ and forum for discussion and exchanging information. It was welcomed by ministers responsible for sport, the NOCs and the national and international sports associations and other organisations.

It has meanwhile become abundantly clear that, within the framework of this forum, the ideas of the European Commission and sports organisations in Europe are beginning to harmonise.

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Under the heading **'Eurathlon'**, sport will be given its own system of sponsorship, focusing mainly on popular sport and sport for the handicapped.

Even though European Union institutions have as yet no organisational powers in the sporting field, the EU's past and future law-making activities will have a growing influence on sport. This is shown by the so-called 'Bosman judgement', which lays down that professional footballers within the EU can now switch from one club to another without transfer fees having to be paid to the club they leave. Other examples are the freedom of movement of professional sportsmen and sportswomen, recognition of certificates and diplomas, standardisation of sports equipment and the granting of television transmission rights for sports events. In 1998, the European Parliament dealt with the allocation of tickets for the World Football Championship in France.

The German Sports Federation is pressing for the EU's Treaty of Maastricht to be extended to include sport in its regulations. At the same time, the DSB wants strict adherence to the principle of subsidiarity and autonomy in all sporting matters. The DSB says this is in line with the unanimous opinion of the other main sports organisations in EU countries.

The growing importance of the European dimension in sport is reflected in Germany in the existence of the **European Sports Studies Society** at the German Sports College in Cologne and the **European Academy of Sport** at Borken (Germany) and Gelderland (Netherlands). Founded in 1994, the academy sees itself as a venue for sporting encounters between Germany and the Netherlands. It also performs remunerative and honorary roles in the basic and advanced training of sportsmen and sportswomen, trainers and officials.

The Federal government also cooperates with other countries in the sports sector in the **Council of Europe**. This organ's importance has been enhanced by the accession of the Russian Federation and other east European countries. **The European Sports Ministers Conference (ESMC)**, linking 23 countries, regularly discusses current sports topics.

The main event in popular sport in Europe is **Challenge Day**, a competition involving European cities and municipalities. This brings in not just the few best performers to represent their communities, but the whole population. The town that gets the largest number of people to take part in sport for at least 15 minutes is the winner. Hundreds of towns and municipalities take part in Challenge Day every year.

Brussels is also active on the subject of doping. In May 2000 the European Commission called on the EU member countries to come up with suggestions on how doping can be combated by information campaigns and conferences. The Commission has made € 5 million available for this effort. In addition, the Commission will sponsor a study that will examine whether the various limits for banned substances should be adjusted or even harmonised. The question of whether test processes should be harmonised across Europe is also to be examined.

Germany and the Olympics since 1945 - an historic epoch

Sport in Germany has not always been free from politics. One recalls Hitler's misuse of the Berlin Olympic Games in 1936 or the rivalries visible between the two German states in the sporting sector up to 1989. German history as such has had a decisive influence on the history of sport in Germany.

Attempts to revive the Olympic movement in Germany after the Second World War document the degree of political division prevalent at that time. At one time, there were **three National Olympic Committees** - one for the Federal Republic, one for the GDR and one for the Saarland (up to 1955). In 1951 - like the Federal Republic before it - the GDR committed itself to all-German teams and demanded an all-German Olympic Committee. But only one month later, it unexpectedly sought official recognition by the IOC of the GDR's NOC. Instead, it was the official NOC of the Federal Republic that was awarded recognition. Recognition was subsequently given to the GDR's committee on condition that it participated in forming all-German Olympic teams. Six all-German representations took part in the Olympics between 1956 and 1964. The two sides adopted a joint flag - black-red-gold with the five Olympic rings - and Beethoven's 'Ode to Joy' as a joint anthem. But, from 1968 on, two separate German teams competed in the Olympic Games.

Competitive sport has rarely ever been free from political pressure. Political aims and conflicts have deliberately been imposed on sport, particularly Olympic Games. The 1972 Olympics in Munich were overshadowed by the abduction of the Israeli team by a Palestinian terrorist commando unit, resulting in many deaths. The boycott by several western and western-orientated countries of the 1980 Olympics in Moscow and the Soviet Union's boycott of the Los Angeles Games in 1984 were manifestations of heightened political-military

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tensions between East and West. The late president of the Federal German NOC, Willi Daume, organised an Olympic Congress in Baden Baden in 1981 aimed at reuniting the sporting world after the splits caused by the Moscow Games dispute.

The two German NOCs were merged in November 1990 in the wake of German reunification. All-German teams once again competed in the Olympics, this time at Albertville and Barcelona in 1992. Statistics drawn up by the DSB, accounting for both the medals and the evaluation of placings from fourth to eighth show the nationally-assessed performance of the German teams as follows:

1994 Lillehammer	2nd place
1996 Atlanta	2nd place
1998 Nagano	1st place

Germany will send about 450 top athletes and about 260 trainers, doctors and physiotherapists to the 2000 Summer Olympic Games in Sydney. A total of about 200 National Olympic Committees plan to take part. Asked what he perceived as the greatest threats to the Olympic movement, Walther Tröger, the current German NOC President, said: *"Though it may sound a cliché, the threats are of a social nature and they loom in all spheres - wars, the North-South division and the lack of equality of opportunity between the poor and the rich countries and their sportsmen and sportswomen."*

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